

In Our Opinion: A hands-on civics lesson

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By Macomb Daily Editorial Board

The issue: High school students will work the polls during the May school election.

Our view: County Clerk Sabaugh is giving the students a fantastic lesson in civic duties.

Macomb County Clerk Carmella Sabaugh has come up with another innovative idea to spur interest in the election process while filling a gap.

Her decision to employ 72 high school students to work as election workers in the first-ever May school election is a hands-on civics lesson outside the classroom.

Sabaugh said the students will work the polls alongside veteran election inspectors in six school districts, providing the teens with a vital role in the running of a school board election.

The use of students as official election workers, and in such numbers, is a first in Macomb County, if not the state and nation. State law allows students 16 and older to work as election inspectors.

Previously, school elections were held in June, but with the new state election consolidation ruling, elections can be held on just four dates.

Sabaugh's department will oversee school elections in each of six districts in Clinton and Macomb townships, where local election clerks opted out of running the May 3 elections.

Sabaugh's decision to hire high school students to assist with elections in those districts is commendable and visionary.

Government class teachers praised Sabaugh's student election workers project.

L'Anse Creuse Schools Superintendent DiAnne Pellerin said the response from her students has been positive, and the project provides an "important role for our students to actively participate and observe in the democratic process in action."

While the clerks in the two townships decided to sit out the election, Sabaugh met the challenge and went a step further by recruiting students to help in a hands-on experience.

That's being visionary.